TAFT TALK

No. 62 *Newsletter of the Taft Family Association* Jun 2012

Mary (Howard) Taft wife of Ebenezer Taft in Quaker dress.
10 Oct 1760 – 15 Aug 1848

Millens Taft son of Ebenezer and Mary (Howard) Taft
20 Jan 1804 – 7 Jun 1890

Now we have a photograph to go with the information on Ebenezer and Mary (Howard) Taft

Thanks to all the energies of Shirley May (Worrall) Renaud we have been sent copies of the daguerreotypes from their family collection of Mary (Howard) Taft and her son Millens Taft. Shirley is another fine chronicler of our family and mentions how gracious Dick Messinger had been to her in the past. She in turn is giving us access to our ancestors (and yours too).

Although she and her husband, Roland Arthur Renaud, moved to Canton, NY in 1970, they return "home" to RI and MA quite often. In fact she retains her membership in the Chestnut Hill Meeting House Association in Millville, MA. Mary and Ebenezer Taft and nine of their children including Millens, as well as many grandchildren, are buried in the Chestnut Hill Cemetery in Millville, MA.

Millens Taft married first Olive Comstock 14 Apr 1825 in Mendon, MA (VR 398). She died 7 Feb 1873 in Blackstone, MA (VRMA 258.292) and he married second Alice S. (Aldrich) Britton, wid of Alfred Britton 29 Dec 1874 in Blackstone, MA (VRMA 264.249). Millens and Olive had eight children: Millens Aratus, Eliza Ann, Willis Allen, Mary Manerva, Mary Minerva, Hannah Maranda, Solon Danforth, and Olive E. Taft. Mary Minerva Taft married first Silas Thompson Turner and second James C. Engley.

See page 5 for continuation of Shirley May (Worrall) Renaud

CAN IT BE ?? A possible ancestral location for our immigrant Robert Taft?

Imagine our surprise and excitement when we received a long article about research into the possible ancestral home of our immigrant ancestor, Robert Taft!

Phillip B. Dunn, England (& Scotland) AG & Res. Consultant, now of West Jordan, UT wrote us a fascinating case study on just that subject. A native of England, he is exceptionally knowledgeable about the issues in the British Isles. We hope to have his entire article and chart on our website in the near future. To summarize:

About 1980 Ezra Taft Benson commissioned Phillip B. Dunn and David F. Putnam, Jr. to research the possible origin of Robert Taft. They spent nearly a month working on the task but ultimately found nothing conclusive. Since then Mr. Dunn has not allowed the question to die, and over the last 30 years has continued to do extensive research, using various strategies, including but not limited to accessing indexes, wills, pedigree files, and more recently modern technology involving algorithms and computerized database/indexes.

He now believes "there's a solid chance that Robert Taft's place of nativity might be narrowed down to a single (large) township in England." His current findings are based on given-name patterns of Robert's family… A single parallel pattern was located—in one single town in all of England's 80-plus thousand parishes, townships, and villages!" He has not yet found Robert's birthplace but "firmly believe[s] there is a strong tie for Robert Taft's extended family pinpointed to a specific area (one or two parishes in close proximity to each other) in one of England's large cities. This finding hovers within the bounds of probability and to that extent it holds some credence."

"The 'Taft' surname is definitely *not* a Scottish nor an Irish surname. If it is a variant of Taffee, a surname derivative, it certainly was not detected or discovered in either of those two countries. Contrastingly, Taft and its close 'sister' 'Toft' are heavily populated in certain areas of England. Specifically, there were some 'Taft' entries in England but nothing that tied to a 'Robert Taft' whatsoever for this time period; … having also studied the etymology of surname-spellings, the thought occurred to me that the subtle-spoken 'o' in Toft could easily have been or perhaps actually *was* misconstrued and heard—as Taft."

Around 2002 Phil re-approached the enigma by searching through Taft/Toft/Tefts in England, widening his search from "Robert" over two generations in the right time frame to using the names of the five sons of Robert and that seemed to break through some barriers. He noted that "three of Robert Taft's sons' given names were Biblical and that being such, there was a chance that by their unique qualities, there was at least *one* specific place in England that had a similar pattern in the usage of these same given names—and by close or distant relatives - all in a general timeframe and in a very specific area."

In his communication he included a chart which he created for the five brothers' names, the English county and parish and baptism dates. Although the individuals listed are definitely not the sons of our Robert, they point to the pattern that he was looking for; and as he states "*the ONLY pattern in all of England where Robert's sons' given names are used, suggesting a strong connection to Robert Taft's possible family connections in England. The only city/parish in England's nearly 14,000 parishes – Norwich - possesses the same pattern wherein four given names are to be found - all within a generation of Robert's generation / birth. This is the sole thin connective thread or 'pattern' wherein four given names are to be found.*"

"It's my firm belief that Robert T*ft's parents could likely have removed him and their family from the greater Norwich area, in the large exodus out of that city - calculated to be in the mid to late 1630's into England's countryside or into another large township or city somewhere and, eventually to America.

"The 17th century North American Robert Taft Family given names usage or 'pattern' has a single definitive match in England (for the previous generation - but a match nevertheless) - in Norwich, Norfolk: wherein

see page 4 for continuation of Can It Be

Volunteers need help too

Recently we received a notice from the Uxbridge Historic Cemetery Committee, dated Apr 2012, noting that the committee takes care of 31 small family cemeteries in Uxbridge at no expense to the town.

Among those cemeteries is the Royal Taft Cemetery on Johnson Road which they have refurbished and have added an iron fencing across the front which once went over the Mumford River at Lynch's Wine and Spirits. They hired a company to scrape and refinish the sections and then install the fencing and gate along the street side of the cemetery.

They contacted the TFA hoping we might be able to make a donation to defray the costs. The executive committee is taking this under advisement and would be interested in your comments.

Howdy writes from CA:

Howard E. "Howdy" Brownson of Alameda, CA sent the TFA a copy of his latest book, "Ancestors of Howard E. Brownson in America: Revised 2010," in which he does a comprehensive job of ahnentafeling (is that a word yet?) his lineage. He feels he could have done a better job with all the information he is finding online now, but isn't that the way for all of us? Every day there is so much added to the web (just make sure you get accurate data and sources when you search) that you can't possibly keep up with all of it.

We have gone through the Taft information and added his recent family data to our files and have sent him some of the older data (and sometimes the questions that still linger on) to add for his next update. Howdy has written us several times over the years and we appreciate all his efforts.

In his letter he mentions bicycling around the Connecticut valley as a kid, spending a few weekends at Northfield when the Youth Hostel headquarters were there, and moving to CA in 1946. He notes he misses the seasons of New England, particularly spring and fall, but not the frost bite or shoveling snow! Go figure!!

Howard E. Brownson is the son of Arr Andrew Brownson and Grace Gray (Sylvester Samuel Gray, Aurilla Mary Taft (Laban, Mijamin, Nathan, Mijamin, Benjamin, Robert).

IN MEMORIAM

Milton A. Taft

Louise Plumley writes to inform us that her brother Milton A. Taft passed on 5 Mar 2012. He was born 12 Feb 1926 in Westfield, PA and leaves his wife Lois and two children, Susan Lingeris of Knoxville, PA and Robert (Betsy) Taft of Hermitage, PA as well as one grandchild, Emily E. Taft of Erie. PA. In addition survivors include 6 step-grandchildren, his brother Paul (Shirley) Taft and sisters Louise (Robert) Plumley, Janet Cary, Phyllis (Ben) Potter, Rose Kimble, and his sister in law Sylvia Taft. Milton was buried in the Riverside Cemetery in Knoxville, PA.

Milton Taft was a machine operator at Pure Carbon, Coudersport, PA, a member of the Cowanesque United Methodist Church, a self-employed store owner for many years, assistant business manager at Potter Co. Hospital, past master of the Masonic Lodge #477 A & Am, past Potentate, Jaffa Shrine, Altoona, PA, past president of the PA Shrine Assoc, 33d degree mason, Potter Commandery, Arnold Royal Arc Chapter, Coudersport Council, Tuna Valley York Rite, Coudersport Consistory, and member of the Tioga and potter co. Historical Society.

Clearly he will be sorely missed and our condolences go to his entire family.

Can it be continued from page 2:

each one of the given names he used to name his sons, has a single matching pattern in one or two English parishes: St Clement Norwich, and St George Tombland, Norwich, Norfolk County. For example, every single given name Robert used was also used within one generation in these two parishes; the *only* parishes in all of England's 13,800 parishes! Most were born to a 'Thomas T*ft'."

As recently as 2011 "searches for a prime 'Robert T*ft' baptism entry have revealed few 'candidates' - two or three, only. One of the most interesting and intriguing entries was 'Robt Toft' [sic] of the rural Suffolk County parish of Grundisburgh, the son of 'Robt and Elizabeth Toft' on 10 Jul 1636. As near as I could tell, without further research, there were no other siblings born to this couple. Does this suggest this was a couple on 'the move', escaping the King's wrath in Norwich? (Grundisburgh, Suffolk is about 30-40 miles from Norwich and about 15-20 miles from Mendham, Suffolk). A brief study in these two parishes might be of help.

"There is no "Robert T*ft" born in the Greater Norwich area for the time period, thus far searched... But it must be pointed out that most of Norwich City's and County Norfolk's church registers overall have NOT been indexed yet… I believe that the complete gamut of parish registers and Nonconformist church registers for Greater Norwich are located at the Norwich Archives."

Conclusion

"While no conclusive findings for your "Robert Taft/Toft/Teft[s]" up to this point was found, the above findings lend hope and perhaps an expectancy for actually locating his birth origins through continued research. This "research" would or should include at worst, having to reconstruct as many of the families and generations of at least the above identified families in the Greater Norwich region and a "must continue" research in all those remaining ancient Norwich City parishes that have *not* as yet been indexed." He lists the following websites as relevant to study: FamilySearch.org; FindMyPast.com; FreeReg.org; and genealogy.doun.org.

As a side note:

Mr. Dunn recommends members go to FamilySearch.org and download the Indexing Tool and help do a bit of indexing. He indicates it is easy to do after you get adjusted to the old English manuscript handwriting. Each page done is one step closer to potentially finding our answer to the origin of our Robert Taft.

Zulime Taft

Jennifer Warren was cleaning her bookcases and found a book by Hamlin Garland called "A Daughter of the Middle Border." It is an old library copy but in quite good condition. She wonders if anyone related to Zulime Taft, his wife, would be interested in the book. Contact her at jtaftwarren@gmail.com or 360-573-1253.

Photo from book

Zulime Taft was born 14 Mar 1870 in IL and died 17 Dec 1942 in Los Angeles Co., CA, the daughter of Mary Lucy Foster and Don Carlos (Zadoc Lovell, Nathan, Daniel, Daniel, Robert) Taft.

In Memoriam

Milton Clarence Taft

Sadly Gisela Taft sent us the announcement of the passing of her husband Milton Clarence Taft in Bonita Springs, FL. She noted that she and the children will miss him a lot – he was a wonderful person and proud to be a Taft.

Milton Clarence Taft, 79, died 10 Jun 2011 at Juniper Village under the care of Vitas Hospice. He was born on 12 Mar 1932 in Shelburne Falls, MA the son of Jesse and Esther (Goldthwaite) Taft.

He is survived by his wife Gisela (Falk) and children, Jane Taft of Redondo Beach, CA and Charles (Chrissy) Taft of Fallbrook, CA, as well as a grandchildren Robert (Kristin) Taft and Julia Taft, both living in Southern CA; and is remembered by his niece Judy Castonguay of Uxbridge, MA.

Milt graduated from Uxbridge high school in 1950 and the University of Massachusetts in Amherst in 1954 with a degree in civil engineering, a member of Phi Sigma Kappa. He was a veteran of the US Army. His career included an engineering position in Uxbridge, MA, a move to New Britain, CT in 1958 to be Division Manager of Rowland Products, then President of Taft Decor Inc in CT. The family then moved to LaCanada, CA in 1965 when he became Vice President and General Manager of M&M Manufacturing in Pasadena, CA, the leader in the magnetic credit card manufacturing business. M&M was acquired by Litton Industries and he became President of the Security Graphics Division. In 1982 he formed his own company, Manga Graphics Inc in a partnership with MagTek Inc which was bought out by Rand McNally Corp. in 1993. He retired in 1995 to Bonita Springs and enjoyed the good life playing golf.

Sports were an important part of his life. He was captain of the football team in high school. An avid Red Sox fan he managed Youth Baseball teams in La Canada, CA for ten years. Milt loved playing competitive golf. He was proud of the numerous trophies he earned in tournaments over the years. He was also an excellent skier and tested the slopes of VT, CO, UT, CA, Canada and Europe.

Milton and his wife Gisela loved to travel and always planned the next big trip. Together they saw a lot of the world and visited six different continents. His family and friends mourn the loss of such a wonderful, well respected man.

Milton Clarence Taft was the son of Esther Goldthwaite and Jesse Alderman (Clarence Augustus, Austin Augustus, Amariah, Jotham, Caleb, Daniel, Robert) Taft.

Shirley May (Worrall) Renaud continued from page 1

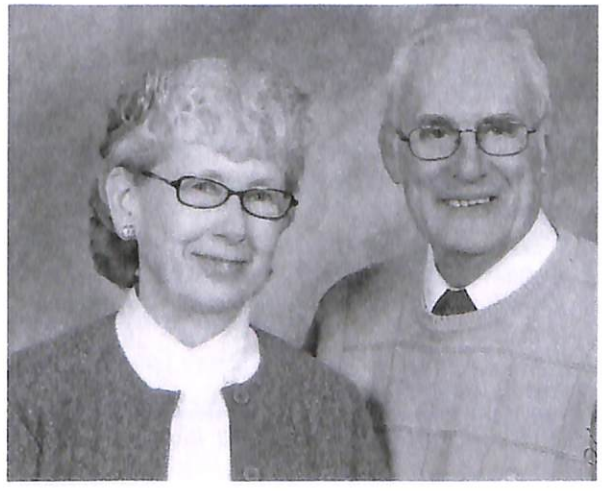
Shirley May (Worrall) Renaud is the daughter of Francis Lyman Worrall and Emma Elizabeth Howard and descends from Millens Taft through both her father and her mother.

Francis Lyman Worrall was the son of John Francis Worrall and Evelyn Althea Turner. Evelyn Althea Turner was the daughter of Silas Thompson Turner and Mary Minerva Taft who was the daughter of Millens and Olive (Comstock) Taft.

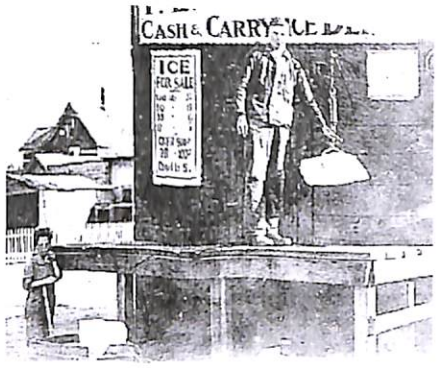
Emma Howard was the daughter of Waldo Everett Howard and Frances Amanda Engley. Frances Amanda Engley was the daughter of James C. Engley and Mary Minerva Taft.

Millens Taft was the son of Ebenezer (Ebenezer, Robert, Robert, Robert) Taft.

See page 6 for the Worrall ice business and the Quaker house.



Shirley May (Worrall) and her husband Roland Arthur Renaud in 2008.

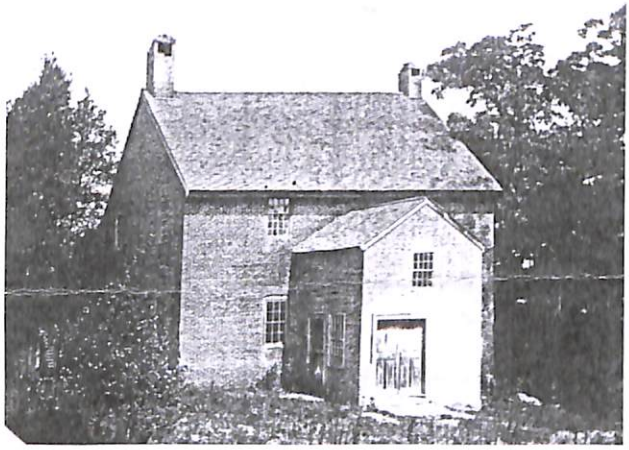


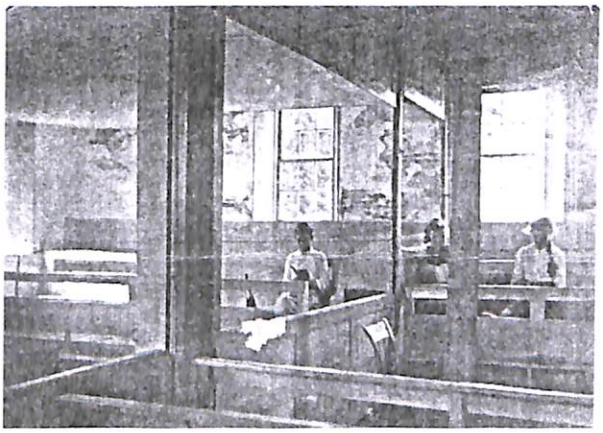
More on the Worralls and their ice business…

Shirley May Worrall's father, Francis Lyman Worrall, owned an ice business, F. L Worrall, in Woonsocket, RI for about thirty years. Shirley writes "I am very blessed to have been born at the end of the 'ice age' as I have many wonderful memories of growing up with the iceman and following him around on the ice truck. Also spent lots of time at the ice house and helping with cutting ice and storing it in the BIG ICE HOUSE."

And the Quaker Meeting House…

Shirley also sent us photos of the Quaker Meeting House on the Quaker Hwy. in South Uxbridge, MA, both exterior and interior views. She wonders if the girls inside mediating could be Worrall girls since they lived nearby and attended. It certainly would have been the place where Mary (Howard) and Ebenezer Taft worshipped.





In Memoriam

Evelyn M. (Taft) Mono

Evelyn M. Mono, 101, of 110 North Main St., Deerfield's oldest resident and holder of the Boston Post Cane, died Saturday morning (4-21-12) in Charlene Manor Extended Care Facility in Greenfield, MA and was buried in Brookside Cemetery, South Deerfield, MA.

Evelyn was born in Greenfield 4 May 1910, the daughter of Harry E. and Mary (Childs) Taft. She was educated in local schools and graduated from Springfield Commercial High School in 1927. She was married in 1936 in Chatham, NY to Franklin R. Mono, who predeceased her in 1991. All of their married life was spent in South Deerfield.

In early years, Evelyn worked at Mass. Mutual Insurance Co., Springfield, and Fisher Bus Co. in South Deerfield. She later worked as secretary for Morrissey Insurance Co. in South Deerfield until her retirement. She was also a member of the South Deerfield Congregational Church.

Evelyn is survived by a son, William Mono of South Deerfield and a daughter, Joanne (Christopher) Pavlopoulos of Clinton, CT, and two grandsons, Stephen and Timothy Pavlopoulos. She was predeceased by two sisters, Marion Drew and Lucretia Field Taft.

Evelyn Mary Taft was the daughter of Mary Lucretia Childs and Harry Everett (Lewis Rand, Augustus Lyman, Omar, Lyman, Samuel, Israel, Robert, Robert) Taft.

Obituary from the Recorder, Greenfield, MA

Looking for cousins

Frank Barber, a 63 years Am. Legion member, is looking for cousins. He purchased one of the Taft family trees and took it to their local genealogical society – it stole the show!. Congratulations on your dedication and enthusiasm. Frank Douglas Barber was the son of Clarence Barber (Frank Demont Barber, Henrietta "Harriet" Taft (Henry, Job, Silas, Stephen, Benjamin, Robert).

Paul Cooper wonders if there could be a list of members by brother line to help other family members in their research. Paul Martin Cooper is the son of Larimore Cooper and Ammie Lenora Snodgrass (Mollie Essie Taft. Thomas Murrell, William Murrell, Moses Holbrook, Willis, Aaron, Joseph, Robert). His email is paulcooper1038@mac.com

In Memoriam

Clarence Ralph Kleinow

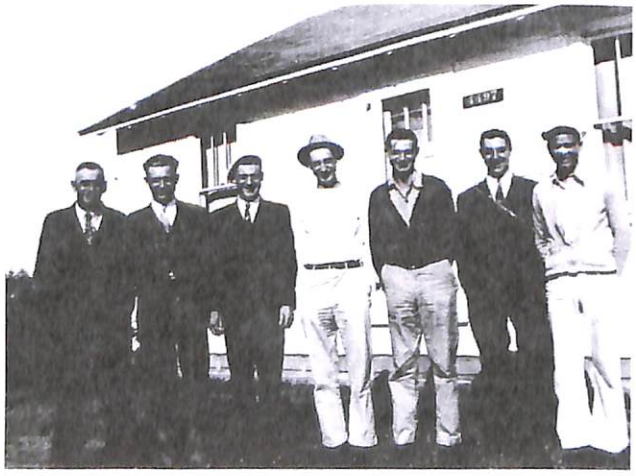
Siblings in 1998: Helen, Melvin, Clarence, Mildred

Norma Winters sent a couple photos of her father's family along with his obituary and her insight into his life.

Clarence R Kleinow of Flint, age 97, passed away 16 Jan 2010 at Kra Nur Manor, Burton, MI and was buried in Flint Memorial Park Cemetery. He was born 13 Jan 1913 in Rochester, MI and married 10 Aug 1933 in Mt. Clemens, MI Helen Mohr who predeceased him in 1989. He resided in the Flint area most of his life working as a utility man in the pressroom at Buick, retiring in 1972. He was a member of UAW Local #599.

Clarence is survived by his children: Norma (Richard) Winters of Davison, John (Sandy) Kleinow of Burton, Carol (Fernand) Poisson of Flint; 10 grandchildren; 16 great-grandchildren; several great-great-grandchildren; sister Mildred Zazula of Gr. Rapids; and several nieces and nephews. He was preceded in death by his son James; five brothers and one sister.

Norma writes "Clarence grew up during hard times as so many of his generation did. His parents had a rocky marriage and eventually divorced after raising eight children. Whenever the situation at home became strained, Clarence would run off and stay with his grandparents, Abram and Hannah (Taft) Hadden, for a week or two. It was a safe haven for him and they were a big influence in his life. Their youngest son, Harry, was only a few months older than Clarence so the two boys were more like brothers than uncle and nephew. Clarence worked hard all of his life. As a boy he trapped animals to sell their pelts to augment the family income and during the summer he worked on the Taft farm or other farms in the area. As an adult he worked for Buick Motor Division doing hard labor on the production line for about 40 years. He played in the Buick Golf League. After retirement he continued to play golf and hunt and fish well into his 80s."



1941 father and six sons when Leo was on leave from Navy

Clarence Ralph Kleinow was the son of Charles Christopher Kleinow and Luella Mae Hadden (Hannah Adel Taft, Emory, Adon, Caleb, Caleb, Daniel, Robert).

If your label reads 2009, you will no longer receive this newsletter. Please contact our treasurer right away, so you don't miss the next newsletter. Thank you.

Katherine Frayne, artist, lecturer and photographer

Katherine Webster (Jones) Frayne was born 8 Jun 1922 in Brockton, Plymouth, MA and died 20 Jun 2011 in Richmond, VA. She married George William Frayne III on 25 Aug 1943 in Douglas, AZ.

As a professional artist, she was widely recognized for her abstract-expressionist painting and papier-mache sculpture as well as her work in ceramics. Among her many awards, she was most proud of her recognition as an outstanding ceramicist by the prestigious Long Island Craftsman's Guild. Her paintings and sculpture were exhibited extensively and she was represented by a variety of New York galleries, where her sculptures were highly sought by people in the performing arts.

Katherine Jones grew up in West Hartford, CT and attended Pratt Institute in Brooklyn, NY. For many years she taught design and color composition in adult education facilities throughout the Long Island area. In the years following World War II she also devoted much effort to graphic artwork in the production of films and audio-visual exhibitions in partnership with her husband.

When they retired to the Northern Neck of Virginia in 1994, she became involved in the design and installation of the exhibition facilities at the newly erected Reedville Fishermen's Museum's Covington Building. At the request of the restoration committee of the Rice's Hotel / Hewlett's Tavern in Heathsville, VA she developed the interior design and furnishings of the reconstructed tavern rooms. Until her death she was actively pursuing new creative work in tapestries and other fabric compositions.

She is survived by her husband George W Frayne III and son George W Frayne IV (aka Commander Cody of rock and country music fame) and her sister Beryl (Jones) Arnold; and was predeceased by her son, prominent artist, Christopher J. Frayne.

Katherine Webster Jones was the daughter of John Seth Jones and Marguerite Webster Taft (Henry Spurr, Smith, Mijamin, Mijamin, Benjamin, Robert).

Comments from our members

Carol Peterson, who has recently moved to Estero, FL to be near her daughter and family has recently received the ship passenger list to Boston for Frances Holden, her grandmother. She was born 21 Jun 1886 in Bolton, ENG and died 13 Nov 1966 in New Haven, New Haven, CT the daughter of George Hill and Mary (Lister) Holden. Frances Holden Bates, divorced, married as her second husband George Knowlton Taft 10 Mar 1914 in Milford, Worcester, MA (MAVR 627.469). George Knowlton Taft was the son of Israel Plummer (Henry Spurr, Smith, Mijamin, Mijamin, Benjamin, Robert) Taft.

Donald E. Taft writes from Jefferson, OH that he has only been to 2 or 3 reunions, but he really enjoyed them. "My cousins still in area, still get together for a family visit, but we moved it up from Xmas time to early fall to avoid bad weather. This winter was not like anything I remember in my 71 years. I had only about 3 ft of snow. It helped on the fuel bill." Thanks for the kind words – and enjoy the warm summer too! Donald Eugene Taft is the son of Dorothy R. and Arthur E. "Tom" (Loren Elmer, Clark Corbin, Adolphus, Timothy, Timothy, Jacob, Israel, Robert, Robert) Taft.

Lloyd Holbrook writes from Goodland, KS that he enjoyed reading the Messinger 1943 letter and recall his (Dick Messinger's) much appreciated help several years ago. He also noted from the same newsletter that he had been to Georgetown, CO and rode the train and saw all the old houses. Glad you enjoy the newsletter. By the way we don't seem to have your lineage!!

Linda R Newberry corrects our TTT 61 of Dec 2011 paragraph 3 on their family. We noted that "Linda's son Greg" should have been either Linda's grandson Greg or Renee's son Greg. Meanwhile she mentions that "Greg is a neat kid, if I do say so myself, and since we (Elden and I) were his legal guardians from age 2 through 18 – we either lucked out or grandkids are easier to raise than kids.... He has one more semester prior to graduating from Western Nebraska Community College and still works part-time at the Country Club." Well done, Greg.

Rev. Austin Taft's conversion

Charles A. Westin of Belleville, KS who has a collection he hopes will go to a family member of Pres. Taft (see below) sent us an amazing account of his ancestor's path to personal fulfillment. His granddaughter Alberta M. Park noted that this was written about 8 months before his death in Jan 1888:

I was born in Wooster Co., Massachusetts May 26, 1806 - Removed with my parents to Vermont when but a child. My Parents were Presbyterians after the strictist Sect.

We left Vermont when I was fifteen years old. I never saw but one Methodist in that State. We settled in the state of New York - Steuben Co. where I lived until I was married on the 9th of February 1831. Here I became acquainted with the people called Methodists. But I was taught they were from witches - full of wild fire and was very dangerous to hear them preach. In 1833 we moved to Huron Co, OH. Here we found a Methodist Society that held their meetings in a log school house near our house.

We frequently went to hear them preach and was convinced they enjoyed something that we knew nothing of. Subsequently a two days prayer meeting was appointed in the neighborhood conducted by H. G. Dubois. We attended this meeting but became offended at the loud and noisy demonstrations witnessed there and left with disgust.

The meeting continued and we were urged to come back by a good Sister and attend the meeting; for the Lord was reviving his Work. I told my wife it was none of their business whether we attended meeting or not - But if she desired to go I would harness the team and we would go.

We went and found a number of the leading men of the Town at the alter of Prayer pleading for mercy. I was invited to go and went and Resolved that I would seek God until I found Him -With Crys and tears I pled for mercy. My feelings were so intense that I despaired, even of life but concluded I would spend life's last hour in pleading for mercy, with little or no expectation of finding it. Eternity with all its dread realities opened up before me and it's impossible for any pen to describe the awful agonies of my mind. It is beyond all human description.

It seemed to me I had already entered the dark abodes of Eternal night, and right here something seemed to whisper to me - that there was mercy for me - I stopped and listened for a moment. What a word - mercy for me. It was the best news I ever heard. From that moment my faith laid hold upon the Savior's promises with an unguiding grasp and I saw a light in the distance far above my head, and grew brighter as it came near, and when it reached me I fell to the floor as quick as the lightning flash, and that moment was filled with the fullness of God. Old things passed away and all things became new. My happiness was complete. This was on the evening of February 1838. And I remained motionless for forty-five minutes without power to move a muscle. My good Presbyterian Father thought I was dead and talked of sending for the Doctor.

The people were engaged in singing, shouting, and praising God - and it was the best music I ever heard. I arose singing "O How Happy Are They, Who their savior Obeyed." From that time to this I have never opposed the Methodists for making a little noise. I soon felt it my duty to join the Methodist Church; told my good mother one day at her house what my intention was. She told me not to do it; that it would be my ruin.

On my way home while passing through a piece of woods my heart was strangely drawn out in prayer. I fell upon my knees and asked God to send staying power upon my mother. That moment the power of God came upon me like a mighty rushing wind and I know my prayer was answered. My sister came to our house that afternoon and said soon after I left their house while mother was setting the table for dinner She suddenly fell to the floor and shouted aloud the praises of God and thanked God that she had the same religion that Austin had. Father and mother soon joined the M.E. Church and have long since joined the Church on high.

I felt from the time of my conversion that it was my duty to preach the Gospel of the Son of God. I told the Lord I had no education, had no gifts, and it was impossible for me to preach and asked to be excused. But I had no rest while I refused to do my duty.

At last I told the Lord if He would give an evidence that I could not doubt I would try. I went into the dense forest about one half mile and laid the case before God in prayer. And all at once the Savior appeared before me. There seemed to be a Halo of Glory around about his person and his person appeared as bright as the lightning. This appearance was manifested twice and vanished out of sight but left inscribed upon the Heavens in great bright golden capitals - The Promise - Lo, I am with you always even unto the end of the world. O! How many hundreds times have I realized the fulfillment of this blessed promise by feeling his presence with me when trying to speak for Him and this is the best witness that we can have.

Now may the Blessing of God rest on every one that looks upon these lines.

Amen, Austin Taft.

FOR SALE

An association member is selling his collection of somewhat minor Pres. Taft and family autographs (25) and memorabilia.

If interested please write C. Westin, POB 157, Belleville, KS 66935 or email ccwestin@nckcn.com for a free informational listing of the collection."

A staunch prohibitionist, Rev. Austin Taft was also the first man to vote for the abolition of slavery in his township, clearly a man of deep conviction and strong courage.

Austin Taft was born 26 May 1706 in Worcester Co., MA and d 12 Jan 1888 in Bowling Green, OH. He married (1) 9 Feb 1831 Susan Benedict and (2) Catherine Rigsdon Stratton.

Austin Taft was the son of Abigail Nelson and John / Jonathan (John, Matthew) Taft. He was the great-great grandfather of Charles A. Westin.

Taft Family Association Officers

President: still searching
Vice President & Genealogist: Neil B. Todd, 26 Walnut Place, Newtonville, MA 02460 neilbtodd@cs.com
Secretary/Treasurer: Pat Allen, 77 Greenfield Rd. , Montague, MA 01351; patallen7@verizon.net
Newsletter Editor: Pat Allen, 77 Greenfield Rd., Montague, MA 01351 patallen7@verizon.net
Website Editor: David W. Taft, Alpharetta, GA http://freepages.genealogy.rootsweb.com/~taft/
Executive Committee: Berneta DeVries, Robert Curtis, Justin Taft, Charles F. Davis Jr., Sally Gagne, Wendy Cadieux

Annual dues of $8 per family are due and payable each year on or before June.
(Your dues are paid through the year on your mailing label.)